

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., said today's 78-to-22 Senate vote confirming John Roberts as Chief Justice may "place a wolf in sheep's clothing inside the U.S. Supreme Court. Roberts presented himself to the American people in Senate hearings as a nice looking, intelligent, articulate and moderate person. What we saw is not what we'll get."

Jackson said, "I believe that when Roberts puts his high court robe on, he will drop his gentle exterior and turn out to be one of the most extreme right-wing, states' rights conservative justices that modern America has ever seen. A Chief Justice like that will attempt to turn back the clock on many of the nation's past legal gains in the areas of congressional authority, civil rights, women's rights and privacy rights, and he will most often side with corporations over consumers. I don't believe the image he projected to the public will turn out to be his eventual judicial record.

"I believe John Roberts shares the philosophy of state-centered federalism promoted by his friend, mentor and former Supreme Court Chief Justice, the late William Rehnquist. In recent weeks we've seen the damage that such a philosophy can cause. How many more breakdowns in the federal response to a hurricane or other situation do the American people have to suffer before their leaders learn to respect the role of a strong, efficient federal government? How many freedoms have to be rolled back? The 21st Century needs visionary leaders and jurists. The confirmation of John Roberts as Chief Justice shows that we must intensify our search for both," Jackson concluded.